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ABSTRACT

Local child welfare and public housing agencies have the resources to collaborate in helping the growing number of American families for whom stable housing is beyond reach. This Child Welfare League of America manual offers suggestions for helping child welfare and housing agencies build strong collaborations to improve services for families in both systems. The manual demonstrates successful models for linking subsidized housing with supportive social services, suggests ways to bring health care providers into partnership with child welfare and housing, and describes methods of prioritizing federal housing subsidies for families identified by a child welfare agency. Following an introduction which describes the benefits of collaboration for family stability and agencies and outlines challenges to housing/child welfare collaboration, Part 1 of the manual describes resources available to help families and children stay together when housing problems threaten separation or delayed reunification, including the Section 8 Program and the Family Unification Program. This section also describes establishing Section 8 priorities for welfare families, evaluating the housing program, providing comprehensive family support, and innovative state and local efforts. Part 2 discusses the inclusion of health care services in the welfare/housing partnership and focuses on the Federally Qualified Health Center program. Twelve appendices include program contacts, sample forms used by highlighted programs, and preliminary data on needs and characteristics of families housing in the Family Unification Program. (Author/KB)

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